WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A signal processor for processing a predetermined unit of input data containing a variable length code and information providing the active length of the variable length code, said signal processor comprising:

input means for inputting the input data;

start detecting means for detecting the start of the predetermined unit of the input data;

end detecting means for detecting the end of the predetermined unit of the input data input by said input means based on the information providing the active length; and

signal processing means for making an action on the variable length code active at the start detected by said start detecting means, for making the action on the variable length code inactive at the end detected by said end detecting means, and for initializing the state of the action on the variable length code at the end detected by said end detecting means.

2.   A signal processor according to Claim 1, wherein the input data comprises MPEG encoded data.

3.   A signal processor according to Claim 1, further

comprising recording means for recording the output of said signal processing means.

4. A signal processing method for processing a predetermined unit of input data containing a variable length code and information providing the active length of the variable length code, said signal processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting the input data;

detecting the start of the predetermined unit of the input data input in said inputting step;

detecting the end of the predetermined unit of the input data input in said inputting step based on the information providing the active length; and

performing processes to make an action on the variable length code active at the start detected in said start detecting step, to make the action on the variable length code inactive at the end detected in said end detecting step, and to initialize the state of the action on the variable length code at the end detected in said end detecting step.

5. A signal processing method according to Claim 4, further comprising the step of recording the result of said process performing step.